

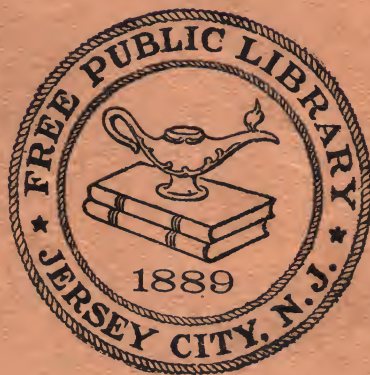
# **BERGEN JERSEY CITY**

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**An Historical Souvenir of the 250th  
Anniversary of the Founding of Bergen**

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**Prepared for the Free Public Library of Jersey City by  
EDMUND W. MILLER, Assistant Librarian**



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PRIOR'S MILL. (Located near what is now the corner of Fremont Street and Railroad Avenue.)  
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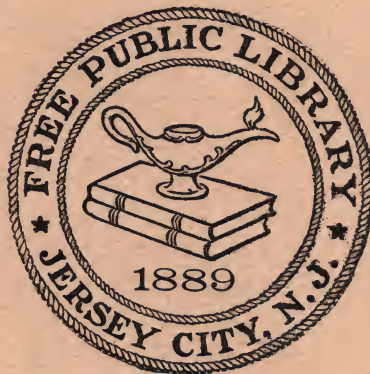
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## PREFACE

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The present monograph is published by the Trustees of the Free Public Library of Jersey City as a contribution to the most important celebration ever held on New Jersey soil. The 250th anniversary of the founding of Bergen which is to be observed during the week of October 16 to 23, 1910, commemorates the establishment of the first municipal government, the first church and the first school in the State of New Jersey.

Two hundred and fifty years ago a small band of hardy pioneers braved the dangers and hardships of the wilderness and planted the little village from which has grown the present Jersey City. In the following pages an effort has been made to tell the story of this wonderful growth and record some of the many interesting incidents connected with it. The facts have been gathered from records and documents owned by the Library and great care has been taken to make it accurate. Owing to the necessarily limited size of this publication it has only been possible to give a brief outline of the city's history and many important events had to be omitted entirely. The Library, however, has in course of preparation a more complete history of the City and County, in which these facts will be given in fuller detail. It is hoped, however, that the present publication will serve to stimulate interest in the history of our city and call the attention of the public to the fine collection of historical data contained in the Public Library.



# BERGEN AND JERSEY CITY

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## I. Discovery and Early Settlements

Before the white race came to America the land included in the present County of Hudson was covered by dense forests and dreary marshes tenanted only by wild beasts and scattered bands of savages.

The original inhabitants of this territory were a branch of the Lenni Lenape nation of Indians. The Lenni Lenape, or Delawares as they were afterward named by the Europeans, occupied all the present New Jersey, which they called Sheyichbi. They belonged to the great Algonquin family of Indian nations which occupied nearly all the country from Hudson's Bay to the Gulf of Mexico.

The Lenape were of medium stature, well built and strong, with dark eyes and coarse black hair, of which the men wore only a single tuft or scalp-lock. They dressed in the skins of wild animals and painted and stained their bodies.

**The Indians** They lived in villages, each family occupying a single hut or wigwam. These dwellings were only temporary structures and the villages were continually moved from place to place. They lived principally by hunting and fishing, though maize and probably some vegetables were cultivated and eaten.

They had a rude kind of tribal government and their religion was a form of fire or sun worship. Though hospitable and friendly, they rarely forgot or forgave an injury and were cruel and relentless in seeking vengeance on their foes. They were, however, much more peaceable than most of the neighboring tribes.

It is not known who was the first white man to view the shores of what is now New Jersey. In 1497 and 1498 John and Sebastian Cabot sailed along the coast of North America and **First Discoverers** claimed for the King of England the entire country.

Whether the Cabots ever saw the coast of New Jersey is not known, but it was included in the land they claimed and it was by virtue of their discoveries that England afterward asserted her title to all the North American continent.

In 1524 Verrazano, an Italian sailing in the service of the King of France, visited the Bay of New York. He evidently discovered and sailed some distance up the Hudson River. **Verrazano, 1524** He must, therefore, have seen the shores of New Jersey and was probably the first white man to view the land upon which Jersey City now stands. The following

year Estevan Gomez, employed in the service of Charles V. of Spain, sailed up New York Bay. It is probable that other explorers also visited these waters, but the honor of their discovery has been justly given to Henry Hudson. It was Hudson who first made these regions known to the world, and his explorations lead directly to the colonization of New Netherland.

On April 4, 1609, Hudson sailed from Amsterdam under a commission from the Dutch East India Company to explore "a passage to China." The little vessel he commanded was a shallow, almost flat-bottomed, sail boat of about sixty tons burden. After vain efforts to find the northwest passage he reached Greenland, and sailing south along the coast, arrived at Chesapeake Bay on August 28.

He then turned back, and on September 2 anchored off the Highlands of Navesink. After spending several days in exploring the lower bay and the adjacent islands, Hudson sailed up through the Narrows, and on September 12 the "Half Moon" anchored near Communipaw. Struck with the beauty of the country, the mate, Robert Juet, makes the following note in his journal of the voyage: "This is as pleasant a land as one may tread upon." This entry is of interest as being the first recorded reference to the land included in the present Jersey City. The next day they continued up the river, reaching Albany on September 19. After stopping there for several days they started on their return voyage, and on October 4, 1609, Hudson passed Sandy Hook and put out to sea.

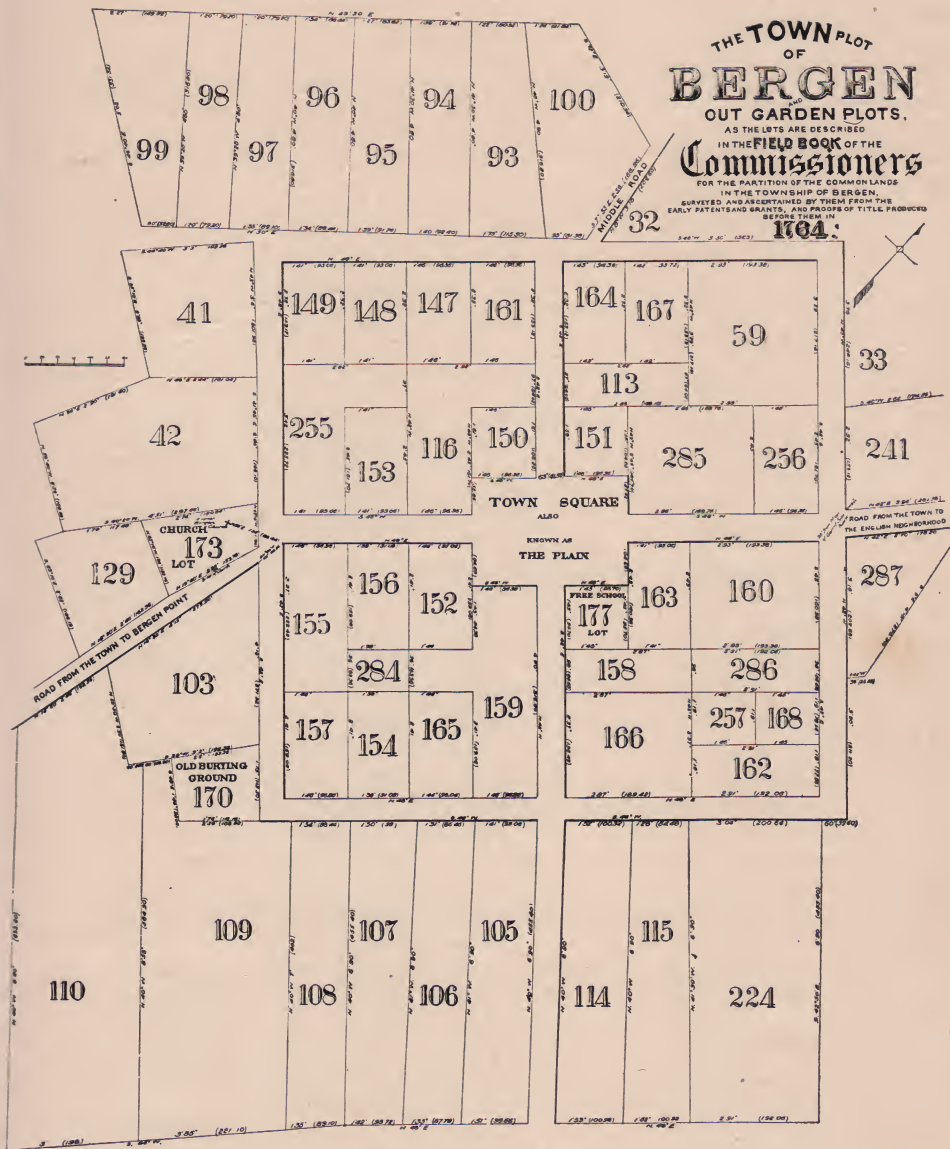
The glowing description which Hudson gave of the newly discovered country on his return to Europe aroused great interest among the merchants of Holland. A vessel was at once fitted out from Amsterdam to trade with the Indians. This venture was successful and was soon followed by others. In 1613 a trading post consisting of four small houses was established on the lower end of Manhattan Island.

In 1621 the Dutch West India Company was chartered. This charter gave the company exclusive jurisdiction over the newly discovered country for a term of twenty-one years, **The Dutch West India Company** with power to make contracts, build forts, administer justice and appoint governors. In 1623 the new country was made a province under the name New Netherland. In the same year another expedition was sent out with thirty families to start a permanent settlement.

Shortly after this it was decided to establish the headquarters of the colony on Manhattan Island. In 1626 Peter Minuit, who had been appointed Director of New Netherlands, purchased the island of Manhattan from the Indians for the sum of \$24.00.

Notwithstanding the success of these early ventures the





## BERGEN AND BUYTEN TUYN

Reproduced from the original map of 1764, by **Mr. John W Heck**. Used here through the courtesy of the **Historical Society of Hudson County**.

No copy of the original map of Bergen, as laid out by Jacques Cortelyou, exists. The original of the map here shown was made in 1764, and without doubt, correctly shows the town plot, as originally laid out, the shape of the lots and the general features of the "Out Garden Plots."

province did not develop as was anticipated. Little had been done toward improving the settlements. The only inhabitants were a few employees of the company connected with the trading posts and forts. None of the land was cultivated except the little that was necessary to supply the wants of those who were attached to the forts.

In 1629 the officers of the company devised plans to improve the conditions of the colony and offered special "freedoms and exemptions" to those who would plant settlements in New Netherland. Any private individual who wished to settle in the new country was offered absolute ownership of as much land as they

**The "Patroons"** could properly improve. Any member of the company who should within four years establish a colony of fifty adult persons was to be acknowledged as a "patroon" or feudal chief of the territory thus colonized. Each of these colonies might extend sixteen miles along one side of the river, or eight miles on each side, and might extend back to a practically unlimited distance. Each patroon was to have full title to the land, provided he satisfied the claims of the Indians by purchase.

The history of New Jersey may be said to have begun in 1630, when Michael Pauw, a burgomaster of Amsterdam, bought from the Indians the greater part of the territory now included in Hudson County. This purchase was made through the Director and Council of New Netherland. The compensation given the Indians is not named, but is described as a "quantity of merchandise." There are two deeds, the first dated July 12, 1630, and the second, covering a

**Pauw's**

**Purchase, 1630**

much larger territory, dated November 22, of the same year. These deeds seem to have included most of the land lying along the Hudson River from Communipaw to Weehawken. In the deed of November 22 the territory is described as "Ahasimus and Aressick, extending along the river Mauritius and the Island of the Manahatas on the east side, and the Island Hoboken Hackingh on the north side, surrounded by swamps, which are sufficiently distinct boundaries."

Ahasimus was the name given to that part of Jersey City which lay east of the hill and was separated from Paulus Hook by a salt marsh, and was afterwards the town of Van Vorst. Aressick was an Indian name, meaning burying-ground, and was applied to the circular piece of upland lying south of York street and east of Warren street, afterward known as Paulus Hook. Hoboken was an Indian word, said to signify tobacco-pipe. With the suffix Hackingh, which means land, this would give the expression "the land of the tobacco-pipe." This was the tract of land now occupied by the city of Hoboken.

Pauw named the district he purchased, Pavonia, after the Latin form of his own name.



It is not known when the first settlement was made in Hudson County. Some writers have asserted that the Dutch landed on the Jersey shore and made a settlement as early as 1610. A number of other writers state that settlements were made in 1618, but there is no evidence to uphold these assertions.

According to the terms of Pauw's contract with the Company he was to plant a colony of at least fifty persons within four years, one fourth of which number was to be brought over within the first year after his purchase. It is known that Pauw did not comply with these conditions, but it is probable that some sort of settlement was made before 1633. All that is known with certainty, however, is that in 1633 an officer of the Company named Michael Paulusen, or Poulaz, was living at Aressick and was probably engaged in trade with the Indians. He was, without doubt, the first white resident of Jersey City. Apparently he did not stay here very long, but the point of land where he lived was named after him: Paulus Hook. Hook, or Hoeck, as it was originally spelt, is the Dutch for cape or point of land.

In the latter part of 1633 two houses were built by order of the Company, one at Communipaw, afterwards owned by Jan Evertse Bout, and the other at Ahasimus, near what is now the corner of Fourth and Henderson street, and afterward occupied by Cornelis Van Vorst. These were probably the first regular buildings in Hudson County.

Paulusen was succeeded by Jan Evertse Bout, who was appointed by Pauw as his representative. He arrived in New Netherland June 17, 1634, and established his headquarters at Communipaw, or Gemoenepa, as it was called by the Indians. Bout was probably the first white resident at Communipaw. In June, 1636, Bout was succeeded by Cornelis Van Vorst, who made his residence at Ahasimus.

In the meantime Pauw's ownership had caused much dissatisfaction and jealousy among the other members of the Company. After a long dispute he was compelled to relinquish his claim to Pavonia, and in return the Company paid him 26,000 guilders, or about \$10,400.00. The exact date of this settlement is not known, but it must have been prior to July, 1638, for under that date a lease of a farm in Pavonia is recorded in the name of the Company.

In making the settlement with Pauw the Company announced that it would "reserve the property unto itself," and in accordance with this notice Ahasimus was held by the Company and became known as the West India Company's Farm, and afterwards as the Duke's Farm. The rest of the territory, however, was soon disposed of without regard to the reservation. In 1638 Abraham Isaacsens Planck bought the tract of land known as Paulus Hook for the sum of 250 guilders.



The first white occupant of Hoboken was Hendrick Cornelissen Van Vorst, who obtained a lease of the place in 1639. In the lease the land is spoken of as having been "heretofore occupied by him,"

but as Van Vorst was unmarried it was probable **First Settlement** that he lived with his father at Ahasimus. He **of Hoboken** soon afterward returned to Holland, where he died.

In 1640 Governor Kieft leased the land at Hoboken to Aert Teunissen Van Putten, and the Governor agreed to build a small house on the place. This was without doubt the first house in Hoboken. Van Putten cleared the land and soon had a flourishing farm. He also erected a brew-house, the first brewery in Hudson County.

Early in 1638 William Kieft arrived at Manhattan as Director General of New Netherland. The affairs of the province were in a very bad state and he did much to improve its condition. Kieft, however, did not know how to deal with the natives, and it was principally his want of judgment which caused the long and bloody Indian wars. In 1641 one of the colonists was murdered by the Indians. Kieft demanded the surrender of the murderer, but the Indians refused. He then wished to attack them, but the majority of the settlers advised against such a step at that time.

In February, 1643, a party of Indians numbering about one thousand, fled from the Mohawks, who had made war upon them, and came to the Dutch for protection. While they were encamped near what is now the corner of Pine street and Johnston **First Indian** avenue, a party of Dutch soldiers under orders **War, 1643** from Kieft, crossed the river from Manhattan, and falling on the unsuspecting savages, massacred a large number of them. The Indians at once made war on the Dutch and destroyed every house in Pavonia. The settlers blamed Kieft for their misfortunes and he made every effort to bring the war to a close. In April, 1643, a treaty was made with some of the tribes, but it was soon broken, and in a few months the war was raging as fiercely as ever, and continued until 1645. On the 30th of August of that year a treaty of peace was made and the first Indian war was ended. The settlers returned to Pavonia, rebuilt their houses and resumed their former occupations.

Settlements were soon made in other parts of the future Hudson County. In 1646 Jacob Jacobsen Roy received a grant of land at Constable Hook, where the works of the Standard Oil Company are now located. Roy was the first gunner of the New Amsterdam forts, and this was the origin of the name Constable Hook or Gunner's Point, the Dutch word for gunner being "konstapel."

In 1647 Claas Carstensen was granted a strip of land extending from New York Bay to Newark Bay, which included a large part of what was afterward known as Greenville. This section was called

by the Indians "Minkakwa," meaning the "place of good crossing," probably because it was the most convenient pass between the two bays.

At "Awiehaken," as the Indians called the present Weehawken, Maryn Adriaensen in 1647 was given a tract of farm land. He was the first settler at Weehawken, which still preserves its Indian name, probably meaning "the land of the end," so called because the Palisades end at this spot.

In 1654 a number of families were granted tracts of land within the limits of the present city of Bayonne. In the deeds they are described as situated between Communipaw and the Kill Van Kull.

For ten years the Indians faithfully observed the treaty made in 1645. Peter Stuyvesant had succeeded Kieft as Director General in July, 1646, and his conciliatory treatment of the Indians did much to preserve peace. Unfortunately in 1655 an Indian girl was shot while stealing some peaches from a farmer in Manhattan. War at once broke out, and on the night of September 15th a party of Indians attacked New Amsterdam. They were soon repulsed, but they immediately crossed the river, and falling on the settlements at Pavonia destroyed every house and farm. One hundred of the settlers were killed, one hundred and fifty taken prisoners and more than three hundred lost their homes. All those who could escape took refuge in New Amsterdam. The savages having spent their fury soon found that their prisoners were an encumbrance and made proposals for ransoming them. After considerable negotiations the captives were returned and peace finally established.

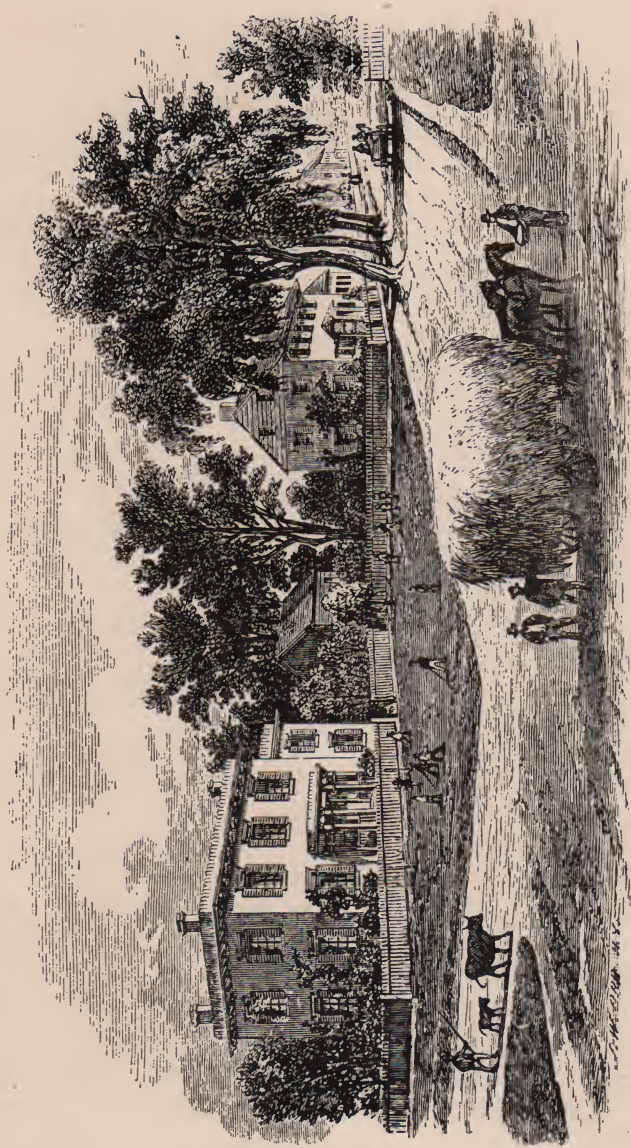
Wishing to avoid any trouble with the Indians regarding the ownership of the land at Pavonia Governor Stuyvesant decided to repurchase it. On January 30, 1658, a new deed was made by which the Indians transferred to the Dutch all that part of the present Hudson County which lies east of the Hackensack River and Newark Bay. The compensation given the Indians consisted of "eighty fathoms of wampum, twenty fathoms of cloth, twelve kettles, six guns, two blankets, one double kettle, one half barrel of strong beer."

### **Hudson County Repurchased, 1658**

## **II. Bergen**

The settlers who had been driven from their homes wished to return as soon as the war was over, but on January 18, 1656, the Council issued an order commanding them to concentrate in villages for better protection against the savages. In 1658 some of them obtained permission to go back to their farms on this condition. They returned, but for nearly two years they made no effort to form a village or make any provision against the attacks of the





BERGEN SQUARE, 1852. (From an Old Print).



Indians. This called forth another edict ordering all isolated farmers to move to the nearest village or to form a fortified village at some favorably situated spot.

On March 1, 1660, Tielman Van Vleck and some others asked permission "to settle on the maize land behind Gemoenepaen." These requests were refused, but on the 16th of August several inhabitants, whose names have not been preserved, asked for permission to cultivate the land "behind Communipaw and to make there a village or concentration." This petition was at once granted on condition that the village must be formed on a spot that could be easily defended; and while the lots were to be given free, each settler was obliged to build his house within six weeks after he had drawn his lot; and from each house there must be furnished at least one person able to bear arms.

The exact date of the founding of Bergen is not known, but from the few documents which have come down to us the time can be fixed quite closely, and there is no doubt that the site was selected, the village surveyed, laid out and given a name, **The Founding of Bergen** between the 16th of August, the date of the above petition and some time in November, 1660. In a letter written by Governor Stuyvesant dated October 6th, 1660, he calls attention to several villages needing preachers and among them mentions "a newly planted village of about thirty families across the North River." It is evident from this that the town had been formed but not yet named.

The earliest document in which the name appears is a survey of a lot made in November, 1660, the day of the month not being given. In this document the lot is described as being "near to the village of Bergen in the new maize land." The "maize land" alluded to was a small clearing probably made by the Indians for the cultivation of maize. It was located near what is now the corner of Montgomery street and Bergen avenue.

The origin of the name Bergen has been a matter of much dispute. Some historians have claimed that it was called after the city of Norway of the same name; others that it was named after the little town of Bergen-Op-Zoom in Holland. The explanation which is now generally accepted by the best authorities is that the name was derived from the Dutch word "berg," meaning mountain or hill, in allusion to the high ground on which the village was built.

The first settlers appear to have been from the Netherlands, with perhaps a few Danes, Swedes and Norwegians.

The village was laid out in the form of a square, each side 800 feet long, with two streets, now known as Academy street and Bergen avenue, crossing each other at right angles in the centre. These streets cut the town into four quarters and each quarter was divided

into eight building lots. A street ran along each of the four exterior sides of the plot. The boundaries of the town, giving the streets their present names, were Newkirk street on the north, Tuers avenue on the east, Vroom street on the south, and Van Reyepen street on the west. Around the outer sides of the streets which surrounded the village, palisades, probably built of logs and about six or seven feet high, were erected as a protection from the Indians. On each side of the town where the cross streets ended, gates were placed, through which roads led into the woods and fields beyond.

In the centre of the village, where the streets intersected, an open space about 160 by 225 feet was left as a public square. This open space is the present Bergen Square.

The buildings first erected were probably built of logs. The land within the town was laid out in lots by Jacques Cortelyou, the official surveyor of New Netherlands. The land immediately surrounding the town was laid out in farms and was "Buyten Tuyn" known as the "Buyten Tuyn" or outside gardens. This land was owned and cultivated by the settlers who had their homes inside the village because of the danger from Indians. During the day the settlers worked on the farms, but at nightfall they retired within the walls of the town bringing with them their cattle, which they tethered in the public square.

In February, 1662, a well was dug in the centre of the square so that the cattle could be watered without taking them outside the gates. Troughs were placed around it for the cattle and a long sweep was used for raising the water. This well was in use until some time in the 19th century, when it was filled up and a liberty pole placed on the spot. In the latter part of 1870 this pole was taken down, the square was paved, and all traces of the well were destroyed.

The beauty of its situation and the many advantages of the new settlement caused it to grow so rapidly that by May, 1661, every lot within the palisades was occupied. The village soon became so important that it was given a local government. On

**First Local Government** September 5, 1661, a court was installed consisting of a "Schout" or Sheriff, whose functions were somewhat like those of a bailiff or country sheriff; and three "Schepens" or magistrates, somewhat like justices or aldermen. This was the first court and the first municipal government established within the limits of the present state of New Jersey. Previous to this the Court of Burgomasters and Schepens of New Amsterdam had exercised legal jurisdiction on this side of the river. But thenceforth legal questions were decided by the local court, subject to the right of appeal to the Director General and Council of New Netherland.

The inhabitants of the village were allowed to choose their own magistrates. Tielman Van Vleck was the first Schout. The first



Schepens appointed were Harman Smeeman, Casper Steinmets and Michiel Jansen, who was the ancestor and founder of the Vreeland family of Hudson County.

Almost as soon as Bergen was founded, provision was made for the religious and educational needs of the people. A lot fronting on the square was set apart to be used as a site for a school-house. Engelbert Steenhuysen was the first schoolmaster, and was also the "Voorlezer"

### **First School**

or clerk, who in the absence of a minister conducted the religious services and performed most of the functions of a regular clergyman. He probably began his duties very soon after the founding of the village. His license is dated October 6, 1662. A school-house was not erected immediately and it is probable that school was at first held in the house of the schoolmaster.

When and where the first school-house was erected is not known, but it was probably built about 1664. According to tradition, which has been accepted by some of the best authorities, the first school-house was located on the high ground just outside the palisade, near what is now the corner of Tuers avenue and Vroom street. This building was also used for religious purposes until the erection of the octagonal church in 1680.

Many authorities, however, believe that a school building was erected at an early date on the plot of land facing Bergen Square, which had been set aside for that purpose when the village was first laid out, and which is now occupied by Public School No. 11. This is very probable, for it seems unlikely that this lot would have been left idle until 1708 when the second school was built. As the school-house was the first in New Jersey, and the first public building within the limits of the present Jersey City, it would be of great interest if we knew its exact location and something of its appearance. But unfortunately few records regarding it have come down to us. Most of the historians believe it was built of logs, though even this has been questioned by some. All that is known with certainty is that there was a school-building, for in the old church records are found a number of items of expense for repairs and work done on "the school-house."

The second school building was erected on the site now occupied by Public School No. 11. It was begun in 1708, and was probably completed about 1710. According to the old records

### **Second School and Columbia Academy**

the total cost was 1193 guilders and 10 stuivers, or \$477.40. This building was probably in use until 1790 when the Columbia Academy was erected on the same site. This was a large stone building, two stories high surmounted by a cupola. For many years the Columbia Academy had a high reputation and many of the city's prominent men were educated within its walls.



In 1857 the Columbia Academy was torn down to make way for the school-house known as "Columbia District School No. 1, Town of Bergen" and afterwards as Public School No. 11, Jersey City. The corner stone of this building was laid July 28, 1858. This structure was in turn torn down in 1903 and the present handsome building erected in its place.

The first church, now known as the Bergen Reformed Church, was organized almost as soon as the village was founded. In 1662 the sum of 417 guilders (\$166.80) was subscribed by the inhabitants of the town for the support of a minister, and a petition was made to the Governor General and Council of Netherland for a pastor. Until 1680 the religious services were held in the school-house erected about 1664 near Tuers avenue and Vroom street.

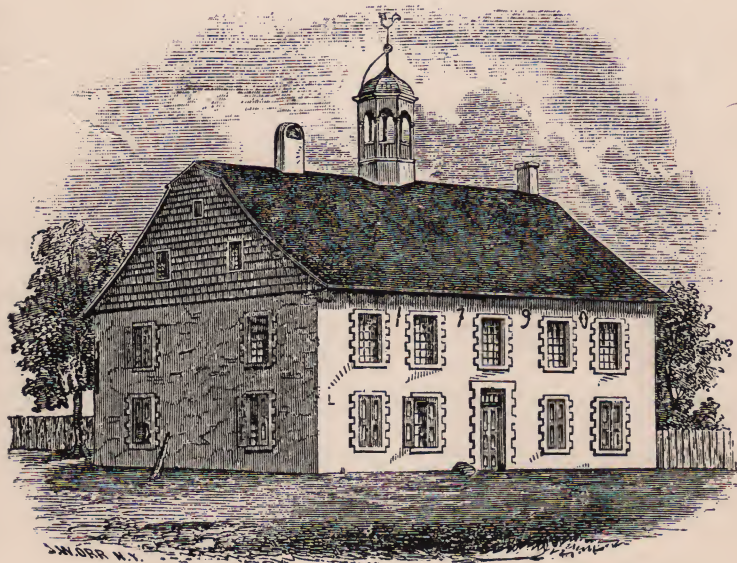
In 1680 the first building exclusively for church purposes was erected near the corner of Bergen avenue and Vroom street. It was an octagonal stone building with the roof sloping to a point and surmounted by a weather-vane. The windows were placed high above the ground. In 1683 a bell was placed in the roof. When ringing the bell the sexton stood in the centre of the building. The pews were placed around the wall and were occupied by the men, the rest of the floor being used by the women who sat on chairs. The minister preached from a pulpit placed high above the congregation. In front, and just below the pulpit was a small pew with a book rest. This was occupied by the Voorleezer who conducted the services when the minister was absent and led the singing at the regular services. The contributions were taken up in little black velvet bags attached to long poles which were passed around by the deacons. At the bottom of each bag was a small bell to arouse the congregation at collection time. This custom was followed for many years. The sermons and the church records were in the Dutch language until the beginning of the 19th century.

Until 1750 Bergen was without a regular local pastor, the services being either conducted by the Voorleezer or by ministers from New York or other places. These visiting preachers were paid twenty-five to seventy-two guilders (\$10.00 to \$28.80) for their services in addition to their expenses and board. In 1750 the congregation decided to engage a stated pastor, and obtained a supply in the person of Petrus De Wint, who served for nearly two years. The first permanent minister was William Jackson who was called in 1753, but was not installed until 1757, having been sent to Holland in the meantime to complete his studies.

In 1773 a new and larger building was erected on the spot where the octagonal church stood. This building was of stone and was 45 feet wide and 60 feet long. It was in use until 1841, when it was



THE OCTAGONAL CHURCH  
(From an Old Print.)



COLUMBIAN ACADEMY  
(From an Old Print.)



torn down to make way for the present church, the corner-stone of which was laid August 26, 1841. The building was completed the following year, and was dedicated July 14, 1842.

Shortly after the laying out of the town of Bergen had been commenced, steps were taken to establish a village at Communipaw.

**Communipaw** A settlement had been made at that spot as early as 1634, and at the outbreak of the Indian war in 1655 several flourishing farms were located near there, but they were destroyed by the savages, and the inhabitants who escaped sought refuge in New Amsterdam. On September 8, 1660, Jacques Cortelyou was ordered to make a survey of the land at Communipaw and lay it out into town lots. The site of the new village fronted on New York Bay and comprised a strip of land about 200 feet wide, extending south from the present Communipaw avenue for about 600 feet. Within this small space the village was built and settled. Orders were given that a palisade be erected as a protection from the Indians. These fortifications were begun but apparently were never completed.

Although Bergen had been founded and settled by the Dutch, it did not long remain under the Dutch rule. By virtue of the discoveries made by the Cabots in 1497 and 1498, England claimed ownership of all of North America. **Bergen Becomes an English Colony** On March 12, 1664, Charles II, granted the province of New Netherland to his brother, the Duke of York. Soon after the Duke sold to Lord Berkeley and Sir George Carteret the tract of land lying between the Hudson and Delaware Rivers, and this tract was given the name of "New Jersey" in honor of Sir George Carteret, who was born on the island of Jersey in the English channel.

On May 25, 1664, an expedition sailed from England to seize New Netherland and on September 8, captured and took possession of New Amsterdam. The following February, Philip Carteret, a brother of Sir George, was appointed Governor of New Jersey and in the latter part of July, 1665, he arrived and assumed control of the province.

In 1668 Governor Carteret granted a new charter to the town of Bergen. This charter was largely a confirmation of the rights and privileges which the inhabitants enjoyed under the Dutch government. The boundaries of the town are described in the charter and included nearly all the present **Carteret's Charter, 1668** Jersey City and Bayonne; "the whole both of upland and meadows and waste land containing according to the survey 11,520 acres English measure." Among other things the charter empowers the freeholders to choose their own minister and provides that all shall contribute towards his support and towards the support of a "free school for the education of youth". It also provides that in religious matters there shall be full



liberty of conscience. Provision is also made for the establishment of a court of justice and the appointment of magistrates.

In 1672 war again broke out between England and Holland. On July 30, 1673, the Dutch recaptured New York and a few days later took possession of Bergen. This second occupation, however, was of short duration. Peace was established on February 9, 1674, by the Treaty of Westminster, and under this treaty New Jersey was restored to the English. In the latter part of the same year Carteret resumed the governorship of New Jersey and the Dutch rule passed away forever. The final establishment of the English government met with no opposition. Carteret had treated the people with great consideration and a strong and liberal administration that would insure peace and prosperity was welcome to all.

From this time until the outbreak of the American Revolution the history of Bergen presents few incidents worthy of record. The settlement grew slowly but steadily. The inhabitants were mostly quiet industrious farmers and, while little material progress was made, the people were happy and prosperous.

What few troubles they had arose over the "Common lands" which comprised about two thirds of the township. These lands were held in common and were used by the farmers for pasture and forage. To avoid confusion and disputes which might arise from cattle running together on these tracts, the Legislature had passed a law in 1668 providing for the branding of cattle and directing that the marks be recorded. In spite of these precautions, however, the common lands were a source of dissension. Some of the farmers encroached upon the clearings and fenced them in with their own property. Others would unnecessarily cut and waste the timber.

With the hope of remedying these difficulties a new charter, commonly known as "Queen Anne's charter," was granted on January 14, 1714, which gave the town greater powers and privileges. The abuses, however, continued to increase until on December 7, 1763, the Legislature passed an act providing for a survey of the lands held under patents, and an allotment of the common lands among the inhabitants. Commissioners were appointed and they surveyed and allotted the land and prepared two field books and maps showing the boundaries and titles of the various tracts. This work, which was completed in March, 1765, was one of the most important events in the history of the town. It put an end to all disputes, and these field books are recognized as the final authority in all questions relating to land titles.

### III. Manners and Customs

We who are living in the 20th century and are familiar with the present Hudson County, with its half million inhabitants, its crowded cities and immense business interests, find it hard to realize the appearance of this territory and the conditions of the people during the century following the founding of Bergen. Great as have been the changes in the manners and customs of the people they are not more striking than the changes that have taken place in the topography and physical appearance of the country.

Until after the Revolution all the section east of the hill was marshland, similar to the marshes now lying between Jersey City and Newark, with the exception of a few sandy hills which at high tide were almost entirely surrounded by water. The northernmost of these hills was that on which the city of Hoboken is now situated.

**Appearance of the Country** This was occupied as the summer residence of the Bayard family whose mansion was on the high point of land projecting into the Hudson River. Their magnificent farm included all of the present Hoboken and part of Weehawken.

The upland lying nearest to Hoboken was Ahasimus, afterwards the township of Van Vorst. This was occupied by the Van Vorst family, and the family homestead was located near the present Fourth and Henderson streets and was surrounded by a prosperous farm.

Lying to the south of Ahasimus but nearer to Manhattan was the elevation known as Paulus Hook. This nearly corresponded to the section now bounded by Montgomery, Hudson, Essex and Warren streets. This was owned by the Van Vorst family and consisted mostly of farm land.

Further south was the circular piece of upland known as "Jan de Lacher's Hook," or Mill Creek Point. Here was a flourishing farm. Nearby was Communipaw where was located a small village, and a number of prosperous farms.

On the ridge of high ground lying west of these marshes and islands was the town of Bergen. For a long time this was the most flourishing of the settlements. Because of the danger from the Indians, when the settlement at Bergen was first made, the dwellings were all inside the walls of the village, and the farms just outside. All the rest of the hill was unbroken woodland. As the danger from the Indians decreased, clearings were made and farmhouses built in various sections. But for many years much of the hill was covered by dense forest and as late as 1831 fox hunts were held in the Bergen woods.



Through the marshes lying east of the heights flowed a number of streams. The largest of these was Mill Creek which was of considerable size. This ran from New York Bay,

**Mill Creek** near Johnston avenue and Philip street in a northerly direction, crossing Grand street near Pacific avenue and thence through the marshes and along the foot of the hill to Ahasimus Cove. This stream was deep enough for the passage of good sized sail-boats and was used by the farmers to carry their produce to the market in New York. Landings were made near Prior's Mill, which stood near Railroad avenue and Fremont street, and at Newark avenue, where the West Shore freight station is now located. These streams have now entirely disappeared and nearly all of the marshes have been filled in and built upon.

Along the Hudson shore front the changes made since the "Old Bergen days" have been equally remarkable. Practically all the original landmarks have disappeared. From Hobo-  
**Changes Along the Shore Front** ken to Bergen Point the shore line has been extended into the river to a distance varying from six hundred to six thousand feet. Between the Hoboken ferry and Montgomery street, what was formerly Ahasimus Cove, has been filled in until now the present shore front is on an average three thousand two hundred feet beyond the original line.

Some idea of the population of the early settlements may be obtained from a little book published in Edinburgh in 1685 entitled "The Model of the Government of East New Jersey." This book describes the various villages, and states that in  
**Population** 1680 there were seventy families living in Bergen, forty at Communipaw, five or six at Ahasimus, two or three at Hoboken and several others scattered through the territory. Some authorities, however, believe these figures were much exaggerated. This publication was issued to encourage emigration to the new province, and of course the description was made as inviting as possible.

There is no doubt, however, that the colony steadily grew and attracted many settlers. The soil was fertile and the proximity of New York insured a ready market for the products of the farms. Most of these farms were large and flourishing and the owners prosperous and well to do.

The homes of the early inhabitants were comfortable and hospitable in appearance and were generally surrounded by pretty gardens. The houses were usually one-story structures, built of stone or wood, and sometimes of both. The steep roof curved  
**Homes of the Early Settlers** slightly toward the lower part and was often carried beyond the side walls to form a piazza, the edge being supported by pillars. The roof was generally pierced by dormer windows. Through the middle of the

Reproduced from the "Douglass Map" of 1841, by **Mr. John W. Heck.**  
Used here through the courtesy of the **Historical Society**  
**of Hudson County.**

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Used here through the courtesy of the **Historical Society  
of Hudson County.**



house ran a wide hall with rooms opening on each side. There was a finished attic which contained a store room, and sometimes a few sleeping apartments and a spinning and loom room. One of these early houses is still standing in almost its original form and gives an excellent idea of the appearance of the homes of the first settlers. This is the old Sip homestead, at the corner of Bergen avenue and Newkirk street, which was built about 1664.

Bergen had been founded and settled by the Dutch, and though after a few years it passed under English rule, the people still continued to follow the Dutch customs and manners, many of which were preserved until long after the Revolutionary War. The Dutch language was used in the schools for many years and the church records and church services were in that language until the beginning of the 19th century. Dutch was spoken by many of the people until a much later period.

The children attended the little school in the village of Bergen. Here they were taught the catechism, reading, writing and spelling; and arithmetic when sufficiently advanced. The schoolmaster was also the "Voorleezer," or minister's assistant, who led the singing in church and took the minister's place when he was absent. The school hours were usually from eight to eleven o'clock in the morning, and from one to four o'clock in the afternoon, and school was maintained for nine months, beginning in September and lasting till June.

Children were brought up to be very respectful to their elders and politeness and good behavior were strongly insisted on. The girls were taught domestic duties and sewing and fancy work at a very early age. Elaborate samplers were worked by little girls only nine or ten years old.

The chief holiday was New Year's day, which was celebrated as an occasion of great festivity. This was the day for family reunions and the interchange of gifts. Christmas was generally observed only by church services.

For business transactions wampum or "seawant," as it was called by the Dutch, was for a long time used in place of money. Wampum was the Indian name for beads made from the clam, periwinkle or other shells. Owing to the difficulty in making these beads they were highly prized by the Indians and were used by them, and consequently by the colonists, as a medium of exchange. These beads were of two kinds—black and white—the black being worth twice as much as the white. The value of wampum varied at different times and according to its smoothness and polish, but usually three black or six white beads equalled one stuiver or about two cents of our money.

The dress of the people was probably not as extravagant as

that worn by their rich neighbors in New York, but was gayer in color and style than the Puritan costumes of New England. The

## **Dress**

women usually wore a jacket of cloth or silk and a short quilted petticoat or skirt. The petticoat was one of the chief articles of a woman's apparel and was made of various materials and in various colors, according to the means and taste of the wearer. The wardrobe of a fashionable lady would often contain a dozen or more of these garments. High starched collars or ruffs were much worn, and among the rich were very large and made of expensive materials. Worsted stockings of various colors and high-heeled leather shoes were usually worn. The hair was generally brushed back from the forehead and covered with a cap of muslin, calico or lace, and sometimes with a silk hood. The jewelry most commonly used consisted of rings and brooches.

The men wore long-waisted coats, with skirts reaching nearly to the ankles, vests with large flaps and baggy knee breeches. These garments were made of cloth, velvet or silk, and were usually of bright colors, though black was also worn. The coats and vests were ornamented with silver buttons and trimmed with lace. The breeches were also elaborately ornamented with buttons. Black silk stockings, low shoes with big silver buckles and a low-crowned hat, made of beaver or other fur, completed the costume.

The children were dressed like miniature grown people. Among the well to do, the little girls wore long dresses, caps and even jewelry like their mothers, and the boys were dressed almost exactly like their fathers.

The dress of the poorer people was of course not as elaborate and expensive as that described, but in general character was probably much the same.

Marriages were often preceded by formal betrothal ceremonies, and it was also customary to publish the bans for a certain number of Sundays before the wedding took place. The marriage was performed by the minister or the Voorleezer in the church or meeting

## **Weddings**

house. After the ceremony was over a collection was taken up for the poor, and the newly married couple returned to the home of the bride. Here an elaborate wedding dinner was served, which was followed by dancing and general merry-making. Festivities, consisting of parties and excursions, were often continued for several days after the wedding.

Funerals were elaborate and expensive ceremonies. They were conducted by the "Aanspreker" or funeral inviter. This official, attired in gloomy black with a three-cornered hat from which fluttered a long streamer of crape, visited all the friends of the deceased, notified them of the death, and of the time of the funeral, and invited them to attend.

## **Funerals**

This invitation was a matter of strict etiquette as it was not con-



sidered good form to attend a funeral unbidden. When the mourners were all gathered the Aanspreker would make a few remarks, offer a prayer, and then head the funeral procession to the cemetery, where another prayer was made before the coffin was lowered into the grave.

Sometimes the dead were interred on the farms of the family, and occasionally in the church, but usually the burial was in the cemetery. The first cemetery was near what is now the corner of Vroom Street and Tuers Avenue, where the first church and schoolhouse was located. This was used for over seventy years. In 1738 a second burial ground was opened on the south west corner of Vroom street and Bergen avenue. About 1831 another cemetery was laid out on Bergen avenue between Vroom and Mercer streets and about the same time the Jersey City Cemetery on the side of the hill near Newark avenue was opened.

Slavery was common and existed till long after the beginning of the nineteenth century. In 1800 Bergen County, which then included the present Hudson County, had two thousand three hundred slaves out of a total population of fifteen thousand persons.

Communication between the various settlements was difficult and slow. The roads were rough and dangerous. The first settlers probably used the old Indian trails. The first regular road was built about 1660 and ran from Communipaw to Bergen, following the present Communipaw avenue to Summit avenue, thence to Academy street and through that street to the eastern gate of the town of Bergen. In 1679 it was described as "a fine broad wagon road." Another road ran from Ahasimus to Bergen, past Prior's Mill.

Paulus Hook was connected with Bergen by what is now Newark avenue and a log road was laid over the marshes at the foot of the hill. In 1718 the road now known as the Hackensack Turnpike was opened. A road between Paulus Hook and Newark was begun in 1765. For some distance this followed the line of the present Newark Plankroad.

In 1790 the Legislature provided for the building of a road from the Court House at Newark to Paulus Hook. This was finished several years later and is now known as the Newark Turnpike. There were several other roads of less importance and as the settlements grew new ones were opened connecting the various villages and towns.

The early modes of travel were either by private conveyance or horseback. The first stage line was started in 1764 and ran from Paulus Hook to Philadelphia, going by way of Bergen Point and Staten Island. The journey took three days and the vehicle was a clumsy covered wagon without springs, which was named in all seriousness

the "Flying Machine." Other lines were soon started and the time of the trip to Philadelphia was reduced to a day and a half.

In 1767 a stage line between Paulus Hook and Newark was started. As travel increased new lines were opened between Paulus Hook and various places until just before the advent of the railroads there were twenty regular stages leaving daily from Jersey City.

The first ferry was established in 1661 and ran from Communipaw to Manhattan. The ferry between Paulus Hook and New York was opened in 1764. The boats used on these early ferries were either row boats or small sail boats called periaugers. These boats were slow and uncertain, and in bad weather the trip was often dangerous. They were, however, the only means of transportation between Jersey City and New York until 1812, when the steam ferry boats designed by Fulton were put in operation.

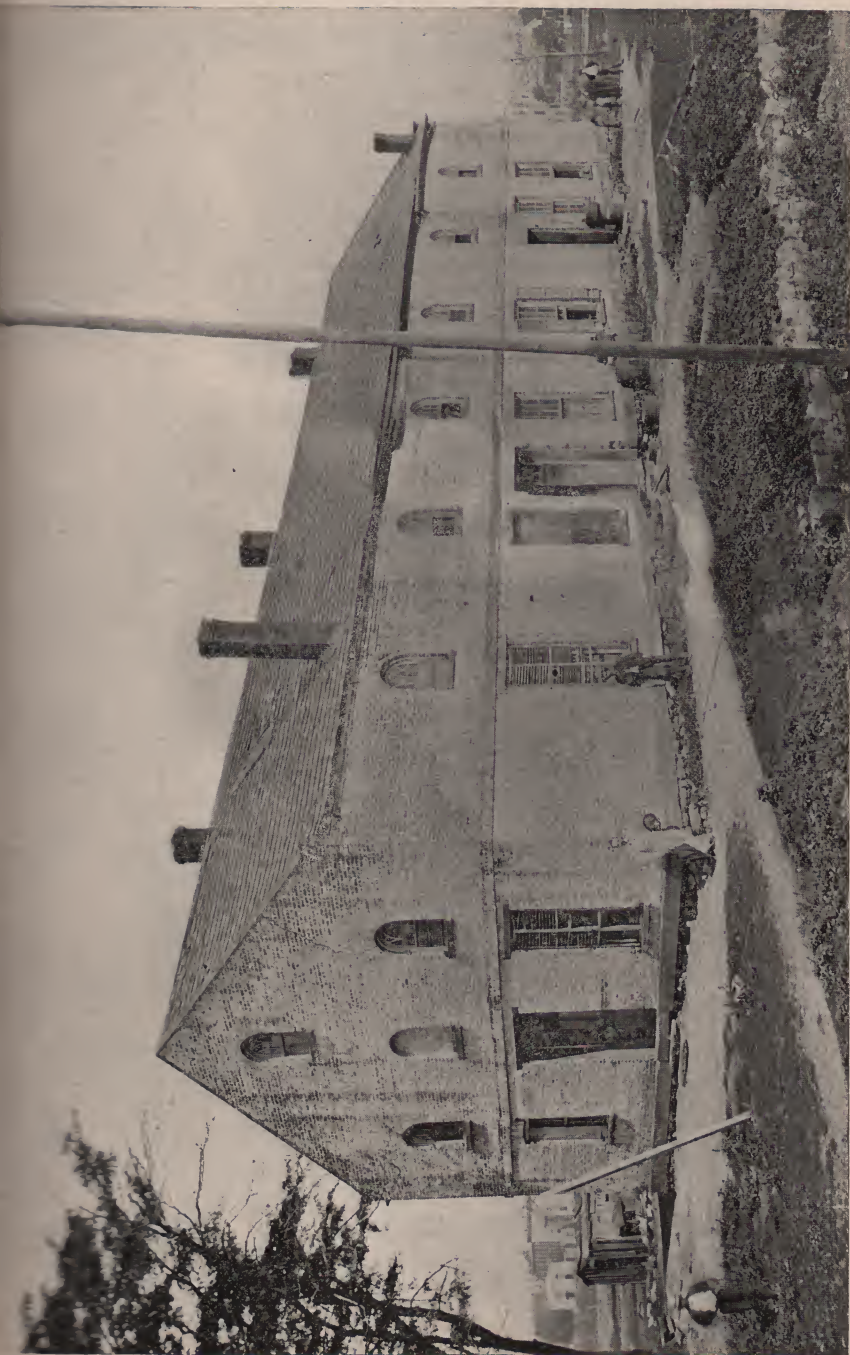
#### IV. The Revolution

The peaceful existence of the Bergen farmers was rudely interrupted by the outbreak of the Revolutionary War. The great military importance of Bergen as a thoroughfare between New York City and the interior of New Jersey was recognized almost as soon as the war began. When it became known in the early part of 1776 that the British were planning to attack New York, Lord Sterling, who was in command of the American troops in this vicinity, immediately prepared to defend Bergen.

Fortifications were erected at Paulus Hook consisting of earthworks surrounded by a battery of cannon. Fortifications were also constructed at Bergen Neck to prevent attacks from Staten Island. These works were situated near what is now 45th street and Avenue B, Bayonne.

In June, 1776, General Mercer was placed in command of New Jersey, and he strengthened the defences at Bergen and Paulus Hook and increased the garrisons. The enemy, however, were arriving in overwhelming numbers and the impossibility of holding the fortifications was apparent. On September 15th, the British captured New York City, and a few days later the Americans evacuated Paulus Hook, after destroying or removing all the stores and arms except a few guns which were unfit for use. The Americans withdrew to the heights of Bergen and threw up intrenchments along the brow of the hill north of Academy street, and on a line with what is now Baldwin avenue. Here they remained until Washington began preparations for his retreat to the Delaware. On October 5, 1776, Bergen was abandoned to the enemy. The British stationed a large force of troops at Paulus Hook and also took possession of the works at Bergen Neck, which they named Fort Delancey.





THE OLD ARSENAL. (From a Rare Photograph owned by the Public Library.)

This building was located on Palisade Avenue, near Newark Avenue. Used as arsenal, barracks and hospital in war of 1812 and as barracks in Civil War. Torn down about 1879.

From the capture of Paulus Hook until the close of the war, Bergen remained under the control of the British. A large number of the inhabitants were loyalists, or tories as the patriots called them, and they favored and assisted the British as much as possible. The large forces of the enemy in New York City and the surrounding country made it useless for the American troops to attempt to regain any of this territory. But though the British were in full control they were not permitted to have undisturbed possession. Raids and incursions were frequently made by small bands of patriots. Parties of horsemen would swoop down on the farms and carry off cattle, provisions and supplies, bringing them to the American troops who were stationed at Hackensack.

In the summer of 1779, Major Henry Lee, often called "Light Horse Harry," discovered that the fort at Paulus Hook was not carefully guarded and conceived the idea of surprising and capturing it. Washington at first did not favor the plan, considering the risk too great, but after a personal interview Lee finally obtained his consent.

The position of Paulus Hook was naturally of great strength. On the north was Harsimus Cove, on the east was the Hudson River and on the south was Communipaw Cove. On the **Fortifications of Paulus Hook** west was a salt marsh, so low that at flood tide boats could cross over it from cove to cove, and to further protect the approach from the land side a ditch twenty feet wide had been dug. Over this ditch, near what is now the corner of Newark avenue and Warren street, was a drawbridge with a barred gate. This was the only entrance by land. Inside the ditch was a row of abattis or sharpened stakes pointing outward. The fortifications had been greatly strengthened by the British. The main works were on the line of what is now Sussex street extending from a point between Washington and Warren streets, eastward to Greene street. The barracks were at the intersection of Essex and Warren streets. From the main fort a redoubt extended along Washington street to another fort at Essex street. There was also a fort on the northwest corner of Washington and Grand streets and some block houses north of the main works.

Early in the evening of August 18, 1779, Major Lee left New Bridge or Hackensack, where he had been stationed. His force numbered about 450 men when he started, but owing to some misunderstanding of orders, his troops became separated and only 150 men were with him when he reached Paulus Hook. The intention was to attack the forts about midnight, but owing to the difficult road he did not reach the ditch which separated Paulus Hook from the mainland until three o'clock in the morning. The troops had to wade through the swamp and ford the ditch and creek with the water sometimes up to their necks. This of course rendered their ammunition and firearms



useless, and they were compelled to attack with bayonets. Fortunately they were mistaken for a foraging party which the British had sent out, and they gained the fort before the garrison was fully awakened. The British commander with a few soldiers retreated to a small block-house near the fort and opened fire on the Americans. Lee had no time to dislodge them, or to carry off or destroy any property. Daylight was approaching and the noise of the firing had aroused the enemy across the river, who could in a few minutes send over a force of troops which would overwhelm the small body of patriots. He therefore made a hasty retreat taking with him 159 prisoners. His own loss was two killed and three wounded.

Lee intended to retreat to Dow's ferry at the foot of St. Paul's avenue, where it was arranged to have boats ready to take his troops across the Hackensack River. When he reached there he found the boats had been removed; the delay having led those in charge to believe that the attempt had been postponed. Lee was therefore compelled to change his route and retreat through Summit avenue toward Fort Lee and thence to Englewood. This was extremely dangerous as he was liable to be intercepted by the superior forces of the enemy. However, he succeeded in getting through in safety and reached Hackensack about one o'clock in the afternoon.

The capture of Paulus Hook was one of the most brilliant and daring exploits of the war, and aroused the greatest enthusiasm among the Americans. Congress passed resolutions of approval and presented Major Lee with a gold medal, a distinction which no other officer below the rank of general received during the Revolution. Congress also appropriated \$15,000.00 to be distributed among the soldiers who took part in the action. A monument has been erected at the intersection of Washington and Grand streets to commemorate the battle.

Paulus Hook remained in the possession of the British until the close of the war. About the first of September, 1782, Fort Delancey at Bergen Neck was abandoned. On November 22, 1783, the British retired from Paulus Hook and on the 25th, New York City was evacuated. The war was now ended, and a few days later Washington passed through Paulus Hook on his way to Mount Vernon.

## V. Jersey City

The section known as Paulus Hook had been settled as early as 1633, but up to the beginning of the last century it had made scarcely any progress. In 1638 the West India Company sold Paulus Hook to Abraham Planck, and it remained in the Planck family until August 2, 1699, when it was bought by Cornelis Van Vorst for £300. From that time until 1804 the greater part of it was used as farm land.

In 1764 the ferry between Paulus Hook and New York was established, and a low frame house was erected near what is now the

corner of Grand and Hudson streets. This was used as a ferry house and tavern. About 1801 a small shanty was built near the ferry and used as a restaurant and oyster house. In 1802 these two houses, some barns and stables, and a storehouse were the only buildings on Paulus Hook. The only inhabitants were Major Hunt, who kept the tavern, and his family; John Murphy and his wife, and Joseph Bryant, making a total population of thirteen.

Paulus Hook at this time consisted of a number of sand hills, around which a race track had been built by Cornelis Van Vorst in 1769. The track was a mile long and horse races were run on it until 1804.

The beginning of Jersey City as a city may be said to date from 1804. On March 26th of that year Anthony Dey of New York purchased Paulus Hook from the Van Vorst family for an annual payment of six thousand "Spanish milled dollars," which was secured by an irredeemable mortgage. On the 18th of April, Dey conveyed the property to Abraham Varick, and on April 20th it was transferred to Richard Varick, Jacob Radcliff and Anthony Dey. These three men, who were prominent New York lawyers, were the founders of Jersey City. They divided their purchase into one thousand shares and with a number of other persons formed a company and advertised a sale of lots. The property was mapped out by Joseph W. Mangin, a New York surveyor. This map is dated April 15, 1804, and is entitled "A map of that part of the Town of Jersey commonly called Powles Hook." The streets were laid at right angles. The eastern boundary was Hudson street, which was shown to be under water except near the foot of Morris street. The northern boundary was Harsimus (now First) street, and the southern boundary was South street, afterward called Mason street. The western boundary was a line drawn from South street to a point near the corner of First and Washington streets. More than half of the land was marsh and land under water. On the map the property was divided into 1,344 lots.

On November 10, 1804, the New Jersey Legislature passed an act incorporating the "Associates of the Jersey Company," and all those persons having an interest in the ownership of Paulus Hook were constituted a corporate body under that title. The act was drawn by Alexander Hamilton and conferred extensive and varied rights and powers.

The sale of lots which had been advertised met with little success, and though many inducements were offered to attract buyers, the city made but little progress. There were several reasons for this. New York claimed ownership and control over all lands under the water of the Hudson up to the Jersey shore. This claim interfered with the improvement of the most valuable part of the city.

### Founding of Jersey City

### Slow Growth of the City



The dispute regarding the boundary line was substantially remedied by an agreement between the two cities in 1834, though it was not finally settled until 1889. All the land in the new city was subject to a mortgage, so that no lots could be sold free and clear. Very few would buy lots on these conditions, and those who did were not willing to improve their property. This trouble was overcome in 1824, when Colonel Varick purchased the Van Vorst mortgage, and it was arranged to sell the lots free from encumbrance.

In addition to these obstacles there were clauses in the charter of the Associates which gave them certain powers of government and control, which the inhabitants and lot owners could not alter or remove. The inhabitants were thus compelled to submit to laws which they had no voice in making.

The Associates being unsuccessful in their efforts to govern the town, the New Jersey Legislature granted several new charters increasing the powers of the municipality. In 1820 the city was incorporated under the title "City of Jersey in the County of Bergen," though in the text of the act it was called Jersey City. Under this law the inhabitants were empowered to elect annually five freeholders to conduct the affairs of the town, who were to be known as "The Board of Selectmen of Jersey City." This body was given considerable powers in the government of the city, but there was a number of restrictions in the exercise of these powers which made them of slight value, and the government under the Selectmen was little more satisfactory than before.

To remedy the defects of this government a new and more liberal charter was obtained in 1829. The governing body under this act was called "The Board of Selectmen and Inhabitants of Jersey City." While this body had greater powers than its predecessor it was soon found that they were not sufficient for the proper management of the town.

On February 22, 1838, a new charter was granted and the city, which up to this time had been part of the township of Bergen, became a separate municipality. The governing power was vested in "The Mayor and Common Council of Jersey City," and they were entrusted with sufficient powers to enable them to control the destinies of the city. Under this act Dudley S. Gregory was elected the first Mayor of Jersey City. Mr. Gregory was one of the city's most public-spirited men, and much of Jersey City's early development was due to his labors.

In March, 1839, the western boundary of the city was extended to the centre of Grove street.



THE EDGE WINDMILL. (From an Old Print.)



On February 22, 1840, the County of Hudson, which had up to that time been a part of Bergen County, was incorporated as a separate county. It comprised Jersey City and the **Hudson County** townships of Bergen and Harrison. East of the **Incorporated** Hackensack its boundaries were the same as those of the old township of Bergen. West of the Hackensack it included the present townships of Harrison and Kearney, and also the township of Union, in Bergen County. Union township was at that time included in Harrison, but in 1852 it was set off into Bergen County.

On March 18, 1851, the township of Van Vorst was added to Jersey City and a new charter was granted. Van Vorst township included the greater part of what was originally known as Ahasimus and was named in honor of the Van Vorst family, who had settled there in 1636. It comprised what was called the "Duke's Farm," the Van Vorst patent, and a few other small grants of land. For many years there had been bitter disputes as to the ownership of the Duke's Farm, but in 1804 John B. Coles of New York bought the interests of the rival claimants. His purchase included a large part of the land north of Newark avenue, which he laid out in lots and advertised for sale. Van Vorst was part of the township of Bergen until 1841, when it was formed into a separate town.

The growth of Jersey City during the early years of its history was very slow. There were, however many indications of the importance which it has since attained. Its great natural advantages and its convenient location for commercial and industrial purposes were early recognized and attracted many business enterprises.

In 1804 Robert Fulton obtained a block of land in Jersey City and soon after established his shipyards at Greene and Morgan streets. These works were managed by Fulton until his death in 1815 and it was here that much of the machinery for his early steamboats was made. In 1812 steam ferry boats designed by Fulton were put in operation on the ferry between Jersey City and New York.

One of the earliest commercial enterprises in Jersey City was the milling business established by Isaac Edge in 1815. The windmill was located about seventy-five feet north of Montgomery street, and fifty feet east of Greene street, where the western portion of the Pennsylvania Railroad Station is now situated. For many years the Edge windmill was one of the most prominent landmarks on the Jersey shore. It was taken down in 1839 to make room for the tracks of the New Jersey Railroad.

In 1824 Dummer's glass works were established on the spot now occupied by the Sugar house. The following year the "Jersey Porcelain and Earthenware Company," afterward known as the "Jersey

City Pottery," was established. It was located at Warren and Essex streets. This was for a long time one of the most important potteries in the United States, and many of the best potters learned their trade here. The business continued until 1892, when the property was sold and the old buildings destroyed.

Jersey City's prominence as a railroad centre began in 1834 when the New Jersey Railroad was opened from Jersey City to Newark. For some time the cars were drawn by horses, the first engine being put in operation in 1835. Other railroads were soon built and obtained terminal facilities here, and in a few years Jersey City became one of the most important railroad centres in the country.

The first street railway was opened July 4, 1860. The cars were drawn by horses and ran from the Jersey City ferry to the Bergen Hill. Previous to that time the usual mode of travel was by private conveyance, or by stages, a number of which left the ferry for various places.

The Morris Canal was opened from the Delaware River to the Passaic River in 1831, and in 1836 it was extended into Jersey City.

About 1847 the Cunard Steamship line built its docks in Jersey City, and some time after the White Star line established its terminal here. For many years the ships of these lines sailed from Jersey City, but they have since moved to New York City.

The construction of works for a water supply from the Passaic River was begun in 1852, and two years later the works were completed and the water distributed through the city. Previous to that time the only supply was from wells, and as this water was of a very poor quality, large quantities of water were carted from the hill and sold by the pail to the residents of Jersey City.

When the Civil War broke out in 1861 Jersey City contained a little over 29,000 inhabitants, or including the towns of Bergen, Greenville and Hudson City, which are now a part of the city, the total population numbered 43,884. When President Lincoln issued the call for troops on April 15, 1861, it was responded to in this locality with loyalty and enthusiasm, and throughout the war Jersey City was well represented at the front, both in numbers and in patriotism. According to the State records the volunteers from this city numbered about one in every eight of the population, but this does not represent the total, for many men enlisted in regiments from other states which were of course not included in the roster of New Jersey troops. Taking this into consideration, it is estimated that the total enlistment from Jersey City was nearly one in every five of the population.

In 1870 Bergen and Hudson City were consolidated with Jersey City. Hudson City was originally a part of Bergen and up to the time of the Revolution, consisted of dense forests known as the



**Hudson City and Bergen Consolidated with Jersey City** "Bergen Woods." It had been formed into a separate municipality in 1852 under the name of "The Town of Hudson in the County of Hudson." On April 11, 1855, it was incorporated as the "City of Hudson" with a separate government vested in a Mayor and Common Council. Hudson City included the territory situated on the hill and bounded on the west by the Hackensack River, on the north by the Paterson plankroad and on the south by the Pennsylvania Railroad.

Bergen, which originally included nearly all of the present Hudson County, had by the erection of cities and townships from its territory, been greatly reduced in size. In 1855 it was incorporated as the "Town of Bergen," with a governing body composed of five Councilmen. On March 11, 1868, it was chartered as "The City of Bergen" and included the land bounded by the Pennsylvania Railroad on the north, Mill Creek and New York Bay on the east, Greenville on the south, and the Hackensack River on the west. Under this act the town was divided into four wards and the government vested in a body known as "The Mayor and Board of Aldermen of the City of Bergen."

In 1873 the township of Greenville was annexed to Jersey City. Greenville included the territory between Bergen and Bayonne, and New York Bay and the Hackensack River and Newark Bay. This section had been set off from Bergen and incorporated as a separate township in 1863.

With the addition of Greenville, Jersey City attained its present limits. It now includes all of the old township of Bergen, with the exception of the cities of Bayonne and Hoboken, and the section lying north of the city up to the Bergen County line.

Bayonne comprises all that part of old Bergen lying south of the Morris Canal. It was set off as a separate township in 1861 and incorporated as a city in 1869.

**Hoboken** Hoboken was first settled about 1639, and for several years was cultivated as a farm under leases from the Governor of New Netherland. Some years later a grant of the land was made to Nicholas Varlett. In 1711 it was purchased by the Bayard family, who used it for a summer residence. William Bayard, who owned the estate during the Revolution, was a staunch loyalist, and when the war was over the Americans confiscated the property. In 1784 the territory was sold to Colonel John Stevens, who was the founder of the present city of Hoboken. In 1804 he had the land laid out and mapped, and advertised a sale of lots. The Hoboken Land and Improvement Company was organized in 1838, and the following year purchased the property which remained unsold. Hoboken was set off as a separate township in 1849, and was incorporated as a city on March 28, 1855.

That part of Hudson County lying north of Jersey City comprises the townships of North Bergen and Weehawken; the towns of Guttenberg, Union, West Hoboken and West New York, and the Borough of Secaucus. These were all formerly included in the old township of Bergen, and were at various times set off and organized as separate municipalities.

The section west of the Hackensack River was in former times the township of Harrison, and was included in Hudson County when that county was established in 1840. This locality has since been divided into several separate municipalities and now embraces the towns of Harrison and Kearney and the Borough of East Newark.

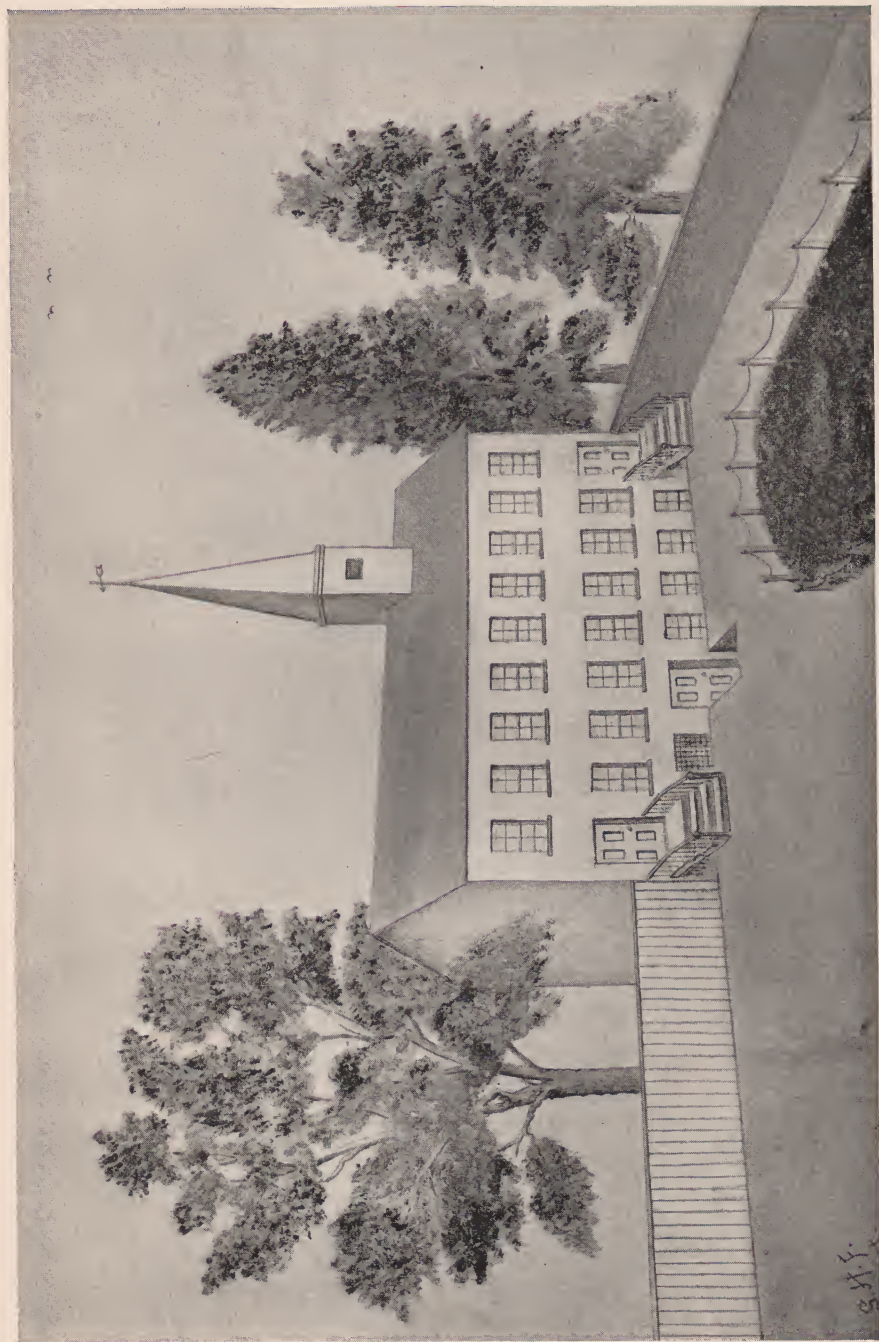
Beside the places already mentioned certain localities in Hudson County have been known by various names at different times in their history. Most of these names, however, were merely popular or local designations, and the places bearing them had no separate existence or government. Thus that part of Jersey City which lay south of the Morris Canal, near Communipaw and Pacific avenues, was known for many years as Lafayette, which was the name given to it by a company that mapped out the land and advertised the sale of lots about 1856. It was never a separate municipality. Claremont was the name similarly given to a tract of land on the hill near the Newark and New York Railroad. Among other names may be mentioned Centerville and Pamrapo which were small villages in what is now Bayonne; and Washington village in Hudson City.

After the consolidation with Bergen, Jersey City grew rapidly, and what not many years ago consisted of a few small hamlets and farms surrounded by dense woods and swamps has now become one of the most important cities in the country. This remarkable growth was accompanied by many important changes and many events of great interest, but there is no space to record them in the present publication.

In educational matters, Jersey City has always been prominent. The first school in lower Jersey City was established about 1806. In that year the Jersey Associates made a grant of land on York street, between Washington and Warren streets, extending through to Grand street and from Grand street through to Sussex street, to be used for school and church purposes. About 1807 a building was erected on this land at Sussex street, which was used as a school and also for religious services. The school was known as the "Mechanic's Institute" and was supported by private subscriptions. Some time after another school called the "Columbian Public

**Early Schools in Jersey City** School" was started. For some years these schools received a partial support from the public funds, but in 1834 they failed for lack of money. Soon after this the Board of Selectmen took charge of the school building and about 1838 it was removed to the rear of the lots on which it stood and was repaired and used as a public school, jail and Town Hall. This building was used for school purposes for about ten years, when it





OLD TOWN HALL, SCHOOL, AND JAIL. Located on Sussex Street, near Washington Street.  
(From an Old Painting owned by the Public Library.)

was sold and the proceeds used in the purchase of the plot of ground on York street on which Public School No. 1 was erected. The new school was opened on February 9, 1848. Dr. Albert T. Smith was principal and George H. Linsley assistant. In September, 1851, Mr. Linsley was appointed principal, which position he held for over fifty years, resigning in 1905.

One of the pioneer schools in this city was the Lyceum School on Grand street, founded in 1839 by William L. Dickinson. This was a classical academy for boys and was a prominent institution for many years. William L. Dickinson afterwards became Superintendent of Schools, which office he held for a number of years. He was an educator of marked ability and was instrumental in laying the foundation of our present admirable public school system.

Among the higher institutions of learning should be mentioned Hasbrouck's Institute founded in 1856 by Dr. Washington Hasbrouck; and St. Peter's College founded in 1878 and conducted by the Society of Jesus. These institutions are still flourishing and have always been important factors in the educational life of the city.

The Jersey City High School was organized in 1872 and occupied the upper floors of Public School No. 5 on Bay street until 1906 when the present handsome building was completed.

There is no room to speak of the many other schools which have been erected in the past few years. The educational growth of the city is shown by the fact that there are now thirty-five public schools, most of which are new buildings and include some of the finest and best equipped schools in the state. In the public school system of Jersey City there are nearly 35,000 pupils and a teaching force numbering over eight hundred. In addition, there are more than twenty-five private and parochial schools and a number of business colleges.

Though the great educational value of a public library was generally recognized, no attempt was made to establish a free library until a comparatively recent date. In 1866 the Bergen Library Association was formed. This was supported by subscription and about 1,000 volumes were gotten together, but after a short time the interest died out and the books were sold. In 1873 the Board of Education established a free library with an appropriation of \$1,000.00 per year. This was continued for about ten years and about 5,000 volumes were collected. The library was kept in the High School and was open on Saturdays only. It was little used, except by the teachers and pupils of the High School.

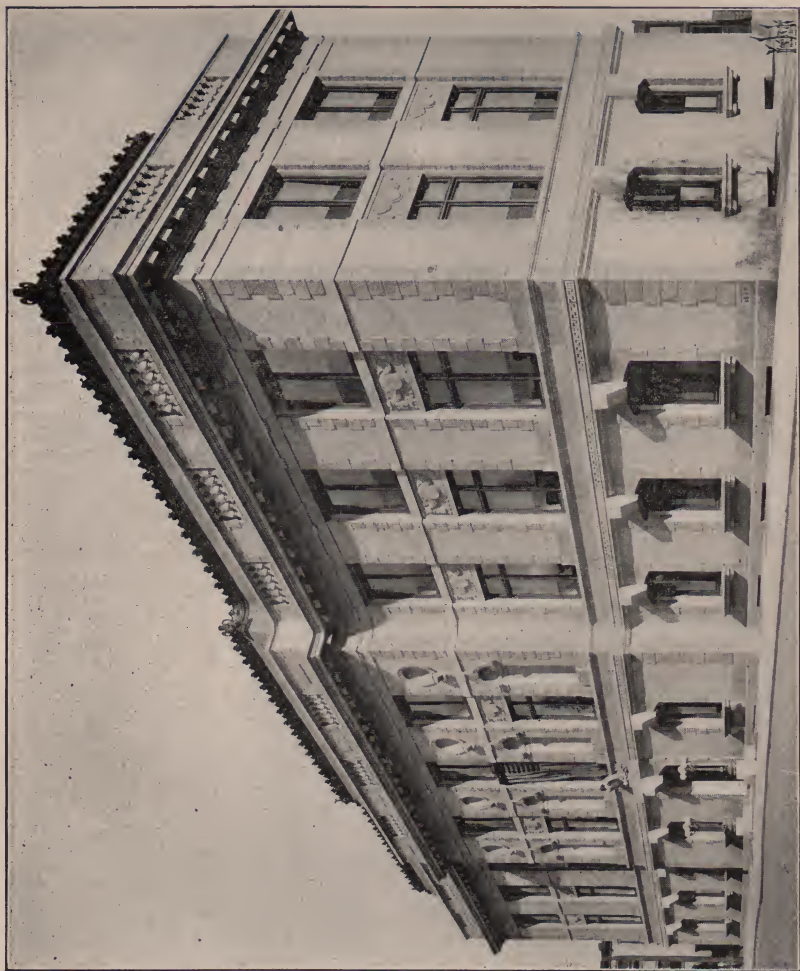
In 1884 the New Jersey Legislature passed an act for the establishment of free public libraries. Under this law the Free Public Library of Jersey City was founded in 1889, largely through the efforts of Dr. Leonard J. Gordon. The Library was opened to the public on July 6, 1891, in temporary quarters on the corner of Washington and York streets, with a collection numbering 15,000 volumes. In

## The Public Library



1900 the erection of the present handsome building on Jersey avenue was begun and on January 16, 1901, it was completed and opened to the public. The Public Library has grown steadily and rapidly ever since its foundation. It now contains 120,881 volumes, maintains three branches and twenty delivery stations and the reports for the year just closed show a total use of books amounting to 754,745, and a total attendance in the various rooms and branches of 137,581.

This brief allusion to the educational progress of Jersey City brings the story of the city's growth to a fitting conclusion. The educational facilities of a city are the surest index to its condition and standing, and Jersey City may well be proud of its library and schools, which in point of excellence and efficiency are second to none. The rise of these splendid institutions of learning from the little log schoolhouse at Bergen is typical of the progress Jersey City has made, and is still making in other fields, and gives promise of the still greater importance the city will attain in the near future.



FREE PUBLIC LIBRARY OF JERSEY CITY, N. J.



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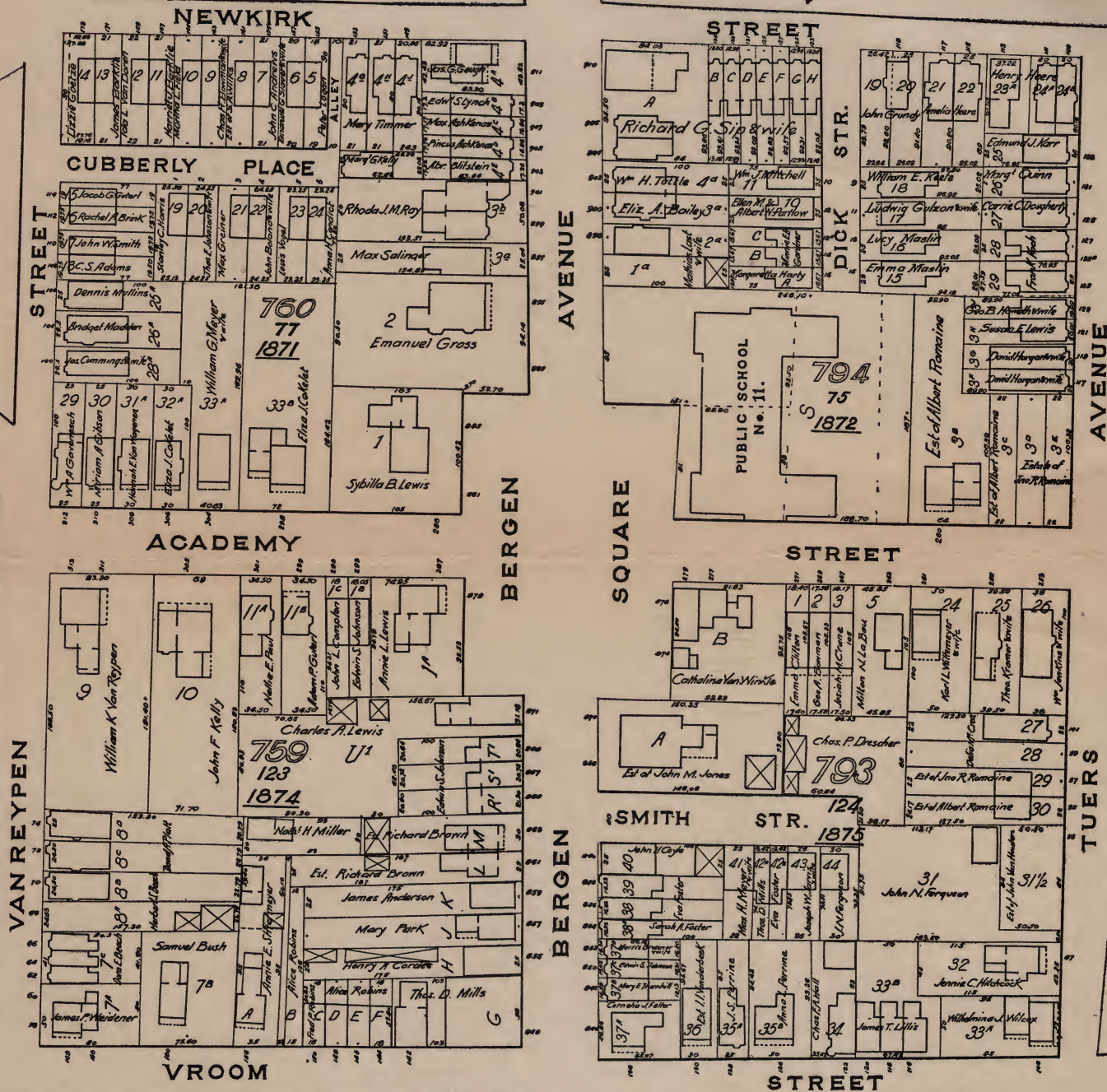
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# YE OLD TOWN OF BERGEN

NOW FOUR CITY BLOCKS OF  
JERSEY CITY  
1910.



## BERGEN OF TO-DAY

Prepared by Mr. John W. Heck. Used here through the courtesy of the Historical Society of Hudson County.

This map was made with great care and is an accurate plan of the territory included in the original Town of Bergen as it appears to-day. A comparison of this map with the maps of 1764 and 1841 gives an interesting picture of the changes that have occurred in Old Bergen.

